

REMARKS

This is in response to the outstanding Final Office Action dated January 29, 2009. Applicants have previously withdrawn claims 19-22 without prejudice or disclaimer. Claim 12 has been amended. Applicants have added new claim 23. Support for the amendment to Claim 12 and new Claim 23 can be found in the specification at least at page 6, lines 4-10 and 27-33; at page 8, lines 19-30 and at page 9, lines 13-17.

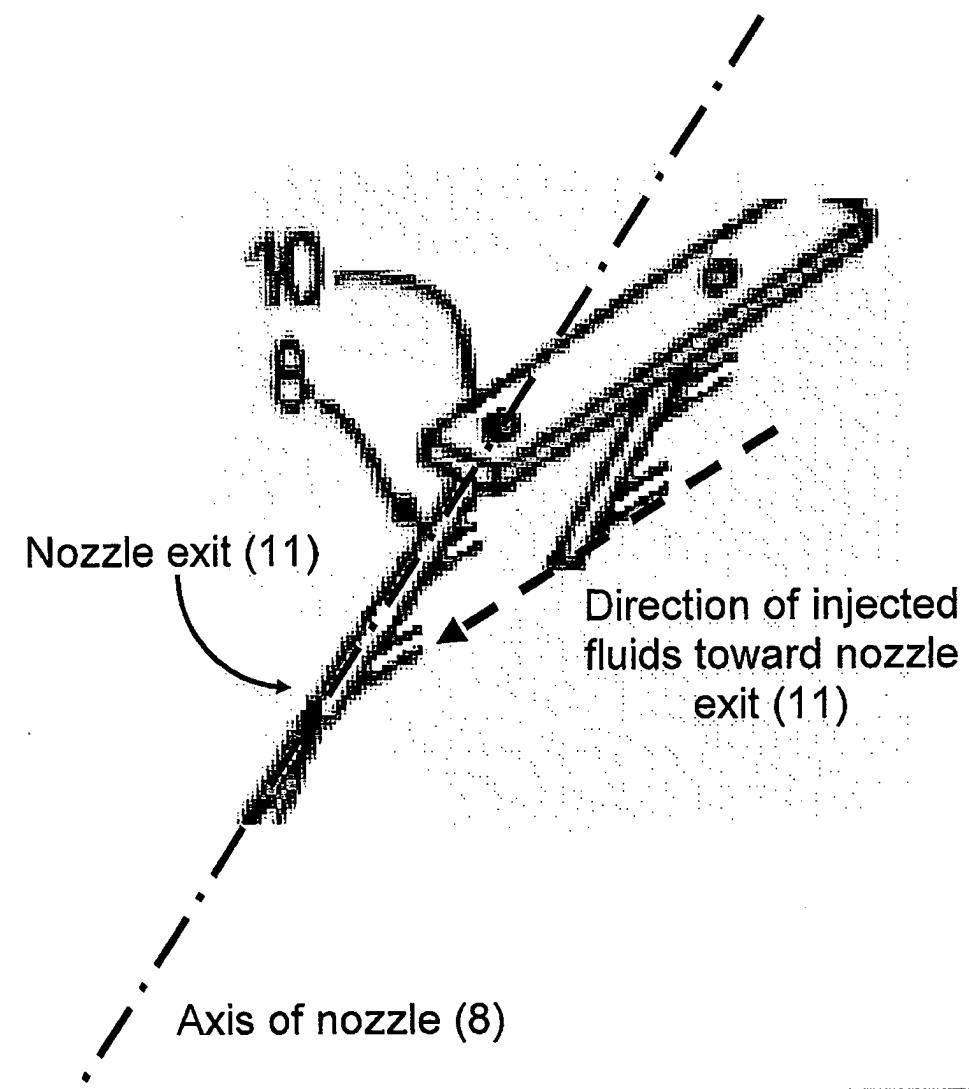
Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and allowance of the claims. Claims 12-23 are pending.

Response to Amendment of Specification

1. In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner indicated the amendment to the Specification filed 12/09/2008 has not been entered. The Examiner indicated the Specification as filed does not have paragraph numbering. Applicants have revised the amendments to the Specification to include the line and page numbers in lieu of the paragraph numbers.

2. In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner indicated the language "pushed" is new matter. Applicants have revised the amendments to the Specification to delete the word "pushed".

3. In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner indicated the language "the fluid being introduced in a direction toward the exit of the nozzle" is new matter. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Applicants' Specification is replete with references with the language "fluid being mainly directed toward the exit of the nozzle" including the paragraph beginning on line 4 at page 6, the paragraph beginning on line 27 at page 6, and the paragraph beginning on line 3 at page 8. Additionally, the concept of the fluid being mainly directed toward the exit of the nozzle is clearly shown in Applicants' Figure 1, an enlarged portion of which is shown below.



Response to Rejection of Claims Under U.S.C. §112, First Paragraph

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 12-18 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in

the Specification. Specifically, the Examiner could not find support for the claim limitation that the roving is pushed from the roving package and that fluid is introduced in a direction toward the exit of the nozzle.

1. As to the limitation "pushed", Applicants have amended independent claim 12 to delete the word "pushed".

2. As to the limitation "fluid is introduced in a direction toward the exit of the nozzle", Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection for the same reasons as discussed above.

Rejection of Claims 12 and 14-17 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

In the outstanding Office Action, claim 12 and 14-17 were rejected 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Droux (WO 02/084005) in view of Picone (U.S. No. 4,345,927).

Independent claim 12 has been amended to provide a method of preparing a continuous strand mat. The method includes pay-out a roving package such that the rate of the pay-out of the roving package is imposed solely by a motor unwinding the roving package. As the roving is payed-out, the roving passes through a nozzle provided with an injection of at least one fluid. The fluid is mainly introduced in a direction toward the exit of the nozzle.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner asserts the Droux reference discloses the method and all of the limitations of Applicants' independent claim 12 with the exception of the fluid directed toward the exit. However, the Droux reference does not disclose the method claimed in Applicants' amended independent claim 12. Specifically, the Droux reference fails to disclose that the rate of the pay-out of the roving package is imposed solely by a motor unwinding the roving package. Rather, the Droux reference discloses a combination of a motor (3) and a pulling means (7) positioned downstream from the roving package (1). The pulling means (7) is configured to pull the fiber bundle (column 3, line 30 and column 4, lines 39-40) in cooperation with the motor (3) such that the means (7) guarantees a constant

production output (column 5, lines 40-41). There is simply no disclosure in the Droux reference of a method that includes paying-out a roving package such that the rate of the pay-out of the roving package is imposed solely by a motor unwinding the roving package as claimed in Applicants' amended independent claim 12.

To overcome the deficiencies of the Droux reference, the Examiner relies on the Picone reference. The Examiner asserts the Picone reference teaches a nozzle where the fluid is directed toward the nozzle exit. However, the Picone reference does not disclose the method claimed in Applicants' amended independent claim 12. Specifically, the Picone reference fails to disclose the structure of a nozzle provided with an injection of at least one fluid, wherein the fluid is mainly introduced in a direction toward the exit of the nozzle. Rather, as clearly shown in Fig. 4 of the Picone reference, a fluid enters the accelerating means (34) from the conduit (62) in a direction substantially transverse to the direction of travel of the strands (12) and also transverse to an axis defined by the entrance opening (63) and exit opening (64) of the accelerating means (7). One skilled in the art would appreciate that the fluid disclosed in the Picone reference is not mainly introduced in a direction toward the exit of the nozzle as claimed in Applicants' amended independent claim 12. One skilled in the art would also appreciate that the accelerating means (7) of the Picone reference would require further modifications in order to introduce the fluid in a direction toward the exit of the nozzle. Accordingly, the nozzle disclosed in the Picone reference does not disclose the method of introducing a fluid in a direction toward the exit of the nozzle as claimed in Applicants' amended independent claim 12.

Even a combination of the Droux and Picone references, as suggested by the Examiner, does not encompass the combination of limitations of the method as claimed in Applicants' amended independent claim 12. First, a combination of the Droux and Picone references does not show a method that includes paying-out a roving package such that the rate of the pay-out of the roving package is imposed solely by a motor unwinding the roving package. Rather, a combination of the Droux and Picone references provides the method of producing constant production mats

having the pulling means for paying-out the roving package as provided by the Droux reference and the nozzle having fluid introduced in a transverse direction as provided by the Picone reference.

Second, the combination of the Droux and Picone references does not show a method that includes a method of introducing a fluid in a direction toward the exit of the nozzle. Rather, as discussed above, the combination of the Droux and Picone references provides the method of producing constant production mats having the pulling means for paying-out the roving package as provided by the Droux reference and the nozzle having fluid introduced in a transverse direction as provided by the Picone reference.

It is well established that all claim limitations must be considered in judging the patentability of a claim against the prior art. As set forth in the MPEP, at least at §2143.03, in order to establish prima facie obviousness of a claimed invention, all of the claimed limitations must be considered against the prior art, citing *In Re Wilson*, 424 F.2d 1382; 165 USPQ 494 (CCPA 1970). In this regard, Applicants' amended independent claim 12 is non-obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) in view of the Droux and Picone references. Therefore the rejection of amended independent claim 12 is not applicable and the claim is patentable as presented.

Dependent claims 13-18 depend on amended independent claim 12 and for at least this reason, are also patentable.

New Claim

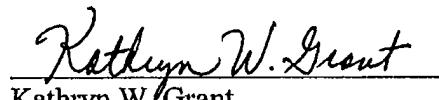
New independent claim 23 has been added to further define the invention. New claim 23 provides a method of preparing a continuous strand mat. The method includes paying-out a roving package such that the rate of the pay-out of the roving package is imposed solely by a motor unwinding the roving package. As the roving is payed-out, the roving passes through a nozzle provided with an injection of at least one fluid. The fluid is mainly introduced in a direction toward the exit of the nozzle. The at least one fluid inducing a tension toward a bottom of the roving, wherein the

only tension on the roving unwinding from the roving package is caused by the at least one fluid.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants have shown that the claims are in proper form for allowance, and the invention, as defined in the claims, is not taught or disclosed by the applied references. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of record, and allowance of all claims.

Respectfully submitted,



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